

“The Glory of Genuine Transformation”

Sermon Notes: Ephesians 2:1-7

Review: Last week we saw the importance of s_____. Your biggest need is to s_____ C_____ more clearly and to t_____ Him!

“Because of their background in pagan religions and the practice of magic, the readers of this letter must become thoroughly convinced that the God to whom they have now given their full allegiance is indeed greater and more powerful than all of the other gods and spirits they once served.”

(Clinton E. Arnold, Exegetical Commentary on the NT – Ephesians, 104)

Today’s Study: Today we discover that our ability to see comes from a genuine transformation, brought about not by our effort but by God.

A Parable of Rings: From *Nathan the Wise*—this German play raises an interesting question—When we consider all the other religions, are Christians any different than everyone else?

A Genuine Transformation: Ephesians 2:1-7 answers the parable’s question

A. What we were – we were s_____ d_____ (1-3)

1. Spiritual Death means that we were unable to recognize s_____ t_____, we were unable to r_____ to spiritual truth, and we had no s_____ to change spiritually.
2. We were captive to the prince of the power of the air – remember the background of the Ephesian believers.
3. This is the n_____ h_____ condition – we didn’t earn it.

B. The result of genuine transformation – we are spiritually alive! (4-7)

1. After verses 1-3, aren’t you glad for the next two words? “B_____ G_____”
2. The Bible speaks of this transformation in several different ways: A New N_____ (2 Peter 1:3-4), A New Self (Ephesians 4:24), and a N_____ C_____ (2 Corinthians 5:17)
3. What this DOES NOT teach... some c_____ m_____ are: we are more intelligent, superior, sinless, or live without struggle and doubt.
4. What this DOES teach: As we saw last week, spiritual life is an ability to see the revelation of Christ and respond to Him as our greatest need. In other words, we can r_____ and r_____ to spiritual truth, a_____ it to our lives, and live righteously as a product of love (1 Corinthians 2:16, Romans 5:5, 1 John 4:9, Romans 6:13).

Applying God’s Word: Let’s Talk!

- How do we respond to the parable of rings? Are you convinced there is a tangible change in Christianity? Why is this important and why doesn’t it always appear to be true?
- Are you spiritually alive? If something doesn’t seem right there are two possibilities. Either you are spiritually dead (Matthew 7:21-23, Revelation 3:1-5) or something is causing you to act “m_____ dead.” (James 3:13-18, Romans 6:13, 1 Corinthians 3:1-3)

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Ephesians 2:1-7

The only way to really define a Christian is not intellectually, not culturally, and not institutionally. Don't you see that being a Christian or not being a Christian is not a matter of degree, but it's a matter of essence and quality? You either are a Christian because you have spiritual life, or you're not a Christian because you don't. Christianity is not a matter of degree or gradations. (Tim Keller)

Getting Acquainted (15 minutes)

Can you think of a time in your life where avoiding a hard truth resulted in a bigger problem?

Talking It Through (20 minutes)

- Sometimes we prefer to not know hard truths when we really need to. For instance, people often are willing to live with a significant health problem rather than going to the doctor. Sin and the brokenness of mankind can also be topics we avoid. What value do you think there is in dealing with the topic of sin?
- Consider the parable of the rings from *Nathan the Wise*. How do you think most people today would respond to this parable? How would you respond to the parable?
- How have you understood the differences between the being spiritually dead and being spiritually alive? Were there any elements of spiritual life that surprised you as you heard the sermon and studied this week?

Going Deeper (15 minutes) If you *still* need more to talk about...

- Consider the following verses: John 3:3-6, 2 Peter 1:3-4, Ephesians 4:24, 1 Corinthians 2:16, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Romans 5:5, Romans 6:13, 1 John 4:9. In light of what you have read, how would you respond to the quote by Tim Keller above? Do you agree with him or disagree?

Taking It Home (10 minutes)

At the end of the sermon we talked about how disobedience limits the benefits we receive from spiritual life. Review 1 Corinthians 3:1-3 (you may also consider Ephesians 5:18, 1 Thess. 5:19, James 3:13-18, Romans 6:13). Returning back to our metaphor of sight from last week, are there areas in your life that are limiting your spiritual sight?

Time to PRAY (10 minutes)

Take a few minutes to share prayer requests that relate to the people in your group, and then find a couple of volunteers to pray for those needs.